



City of Santa Barbara
Planning Division

Memorandum

MEETING DATE: November 27, 2019

TO: Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC)

FROM: Nicole Hernandez, City Urban Historian

SUBJECT: Staff Evaluation of proposed alterations

ADDRESS: 520 Plaza Rubio, Structure of Merit, Mills Act Project

PROJECT: Proposal to remove the wood, double-hung, four-over-four windows on the front elevation and replace with a divided light set of doors and Juliette wrought-iron balcony that extends 10" from the face of the wall (note zoning will not permit the balcony to extend any further.) The divided lights of the proposed set of doors match in configuration and profile to the divided lights of the original windows. The proposal includes removing the wood trim around the window that was added after original construction. The doors will be installed in a traditional method for the Spanish Colonial Revival house with a small recess with round edges. Proposal to remove louvered metal vent and iron grill and replace it with a cruciform pattern of square stucco holes.

This memo prepared by the Urban Historian evaluates the proposed project on the historic resource by determining if the project follows the guidelines for alterations set forth by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards Treatment of Historic Properties. The purpose of this staff evaluation is to assist the Historic Landmarks Commission in the review of a project when Historic Structures/Sites Report (HSSR) is not required and to guide applicants and Commissioners appropriately towards avoiding or lessening project impacts.

The Historic Landmarks Commission designated the building a Structure of Merit in 2018. The property is under a Mills Act Contract.



Compliance With the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

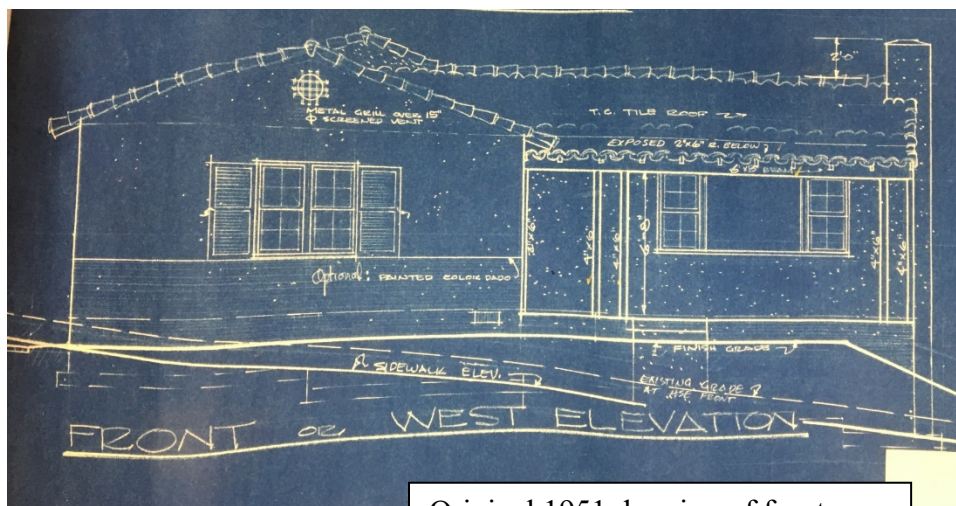
1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.

The property will still be used as a residence as it was historically. The doors will be in the same location as the windows, so there will be minimal change to the expanse of stucco compared to the opening location, and the project will preserve the spatial relationship of the opening under the gable.

2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

The proposed project removes the original wood, double hung, four-over-four windows, and the existing "reyas" and wood trim that were not on the original drawings. The alteration of the feature that characterizes the front elevation will be replaced with a set of doors that will have the same configuration mimicking the four-over-four configuration of the windows, and the same profile and material as the windows so that the distinctive feature and spatial relationship will be retained. The lowered metal vent is not character-defining.

3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.



Original 1951 drawing of front elevation

The original design had shutters flanking the windows that are not on the building today, which currently has a wrought iron "reyas" and heavy trim that were added some point after construction, date unknown. The proposed addition of the wrought iron Juliette balcony that extends 10" from the wall is a typical feature of the Spanish Colonial Revival and it has simple design that will not be overstated, and it will not look like an original element of the house and will not be a conjectural feature.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.

The "reyas" and heavy trim have not acquired significance in its own right.

5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.

Because the new pair of doors will have the wood, four-over-four division of lights as the windows in the same opening as the windows the overall distinctive 1951 post-world war II interpretation of the Spanish Colonial Revival house will be preserved. The stucco cruciform grill will be compatible with the style.

6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

Not applicable to this project. The features are not deteriorated, the proposal is considering replacement to enhance the historic resource.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.

All work proposed will be taken using the gentlest means to ensure no damage to historic materials.

8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.

Not applicable to this project.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The project meets Standard 9 for the following reasons:

The proposed project does remove the original windows. However, the owner proposes to install the new set of doors in the same opening so that the spatial relationship of the expanse of stucco wall to the opening under the gable is maintained. The doors mimic the window pattern and the wood material is compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The new wrought iron Juliette balcony is simple in design to be compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style, yet differentiated from the old.

The proposed stucco, cruciform grill in the gable is appropriate for the Spanish Colonial Revival style as its size and proportion are appropriate for the façade.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Should a new owner wish to return windows to the elevation, there is evidence in the archive drawings to allow for windows that match the original windows to be installed. Staff recommends the original windows be salvaged and stored for potential future use.

URBAN HISTORIAN SUMMARY COMMENTS. No Historic Structures/Sites Report is necessary at this time as the proposed alterations do not have a negative impact on the 1951 building. The new doors will match the windows in configuration, profile and material as the windows and will be in the existing opening so that no changes to the spatial relationship of the elevation will change. The Juliette balcony is wrought iron to be compatible with the Spanish Colonial Revival style, yet simple to be differentiated from original elements. The stucco grill is appropriate to the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The project may therefore qualify for a categorical exemption with a less than significant impact to the resource, if the HLC agrees with the above evaluation and conclusions. Should the project significantly change, a Historic Structures Report may be required.